

RESOLUTION

OF

THE LEGISLATURE OF MICHIGAN,

Concerning the Saut de Ste. Marie.

APRIL 7, 1848.

Ordered to lie on the table, and be printed.

A JOINT RESOLUTION concerning the Saut de Ste. Marie.

Whereas, at a very great expense, the State of Michigan has caused a scientific and geological survey and exploration to be made of that portion of said State which borders upon lake Superior:

And whereas said geological survey, &c., especially so much of it as was conducted under the immediate supervision of the late Dr. Douglass Houghton, has demonstrated that those hitherto desolate regions contain nevertheless an immense and apparently immeasurable amount of mineral wealth, inviting immediate purchase, occupancy, and improvement:

And whereas, with the exception of a few small lots of ground at the Saut de Ste. Marie, (which, from the first discovery of that great lake by Europeans, have been occupied by certain French settlers and their descendants, or those who claim through and under them,) that whole country consists exclusively of public domain:

And whereas the rich mineral productions alluded to, the vast forests of valuable timber which surround that inland sea, and the exhaustless products of its fisheries, together with the long established fur trade of the boundless interior, which heretofore has passed from the direction of the lake of the Woods, through the avenue of the great lake, promise to constitute the elements of a future commerce, not only of inappreciable importance to Michigan, but, from its extent and magnitude, of deep interest to the whole Union:

And whereas it is the opinion of this legislature that if reasonable facilities were furnished for rendering these great natural advantages more fully available, the public lands bordering upon lake Superior would soon sell and become the residence of a numerous, intelligent, and enterprising population; and that if no unnecessary obstacles were permitted any longer to prevent it, an important commercial city, so necessary even now for the transaction and protection of that commerce, would soon grow up at the Saut de Ste. Marie and within the limits of Michigan:

And whereas, during the negotiations which led to the treaty of Greenville, and before as well as after the western ports were delivered over to the United States, the Canadian settlers and occupants of the country

(those of the Saut de Ste. Marie inclusive) were assured by the accredited agents of the general government that their lands would be duly confirmed to them—(see Burnet's Notes, &c.; also American State Papers, vol. 16, page 260:)

And whereas, to that end, commissioners of the United States, both before and after the late war with Great Britain, have duly investigated such of the claims as were exhibited to them by the inhabitants of the Saut de Ste. Marie, and confirmed or recommended for confirmation the greater part of them; (see Am. State Papers, Duff Green's edition, vol. 4, pages 700 and 701;) but for the more perfect establishment whereof, Congress have not authorized the granting of patents, wherefore no title nor assurance of title to any lots or real estate could be obtained, nor any investments be safely made in building, nor in any permanent improvement whatsoever, at the outlet of the lake on the American shore of the straits, the natural and only proper point of concentration and deposite for all the commerce of those regions; yet, for the reason stated, the growth of the place, as a place of residence and as a commercial city, is totally checked and frustrated, the commerce of the country greatly embarrassed, and all motives for purchasing the public lands, wheresoever around that lake they may be, are greatly lessened, while in the mean time much of the indispensable business of the country is slowly forcing its way on to the British shore, where the people and authorities of Canada, more vigilant, though less favorably located, and fully appreciating the value of the prize, seem striving by every practical inducement to secure to themselves, both now and hereafter, the control of this rapidly increasing commerce, and all the advantages and wealth of which it will be productive:

And whereas, in the opinion of this legislature, good faith towards the ancient settlers of the Saut de Ste. Marie, (whose claims there in the aggregate comprise but a few hundred acres of land only,) true economy in the management and disposition of the public domain, but especially a just and fair policy in regard to this State, whose interests and prosperity, present and prospective, in this regard, are so deeply implicated, all indicate the expediency of the early and efficient action of Congress in the premises: Therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Michigan, That this legislature hereby respectfully presents to the consideration of Congress the propriety of adopting immediate measures for quieting the titles of the settlers at the Saut de Ste. Marie, of the State of Michigan, especially of those whose claims have heretofore been favorably reported upon by commissioners of the United States; and for causing patents to issue therefor; and with respect to so much of this ancient settlement as may not, in the opinion of Congress, be comprised within the limits of any such just and equitable claim, and as may not have been otherwise appropriated; and with respect also to so much of the public domain as may be in the vicinity of the settlement, or along the straits of the Ste. Marie, it is respectfully requested that the same be brought into market or otherwise disposed of, at the earliest practicable time, in order that this portion at least of the public domain may be possessed by individual proprietors and settled, in order that the wants of commerce in this regard at least may be no longer withholden; in order that citizens of this State may be enabled with safety to construct for themselves the residences for their protection and comfort, and such stores, warehouses, and other struc-

tures as the business of those regions so loudly demands; and finally, in order that the general prosperity be no longer interrupted by a condition of things which withholds and inhibits the settlement and growth of one of the most important military and commercial points in the whole northwest.

And be it further resolved, That the governor be requested to transmit a copy of this preamble and resolution to the honorable the President of the Senate of the United States, one copy thereof to the honorable the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States, and that those officers be respectfully requested to lay the same before the houses over which they respectively preside; and that in like manner he be requested to transmit one copy to each of the Senators and Representatives in Congress from this State, who are respectfully requested, by all proper and appropriate means, to aid in the accomplishment of the objects herein indicated.

A. W. BUEL,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

WM. M. FENTON,

President of the Senate.

Approved March 21, 1848.

EPAPHRO RANSOM.

A true copy:

GEO. W. PECK,

Secretary of State.

JAMES W. HENDERSON,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

JOHN A. GREEK,

President of the Senate.

Approved March 18, 1848.

GEO. T. WOOD,

Secretary of the State.

Witness my hand and seal of the State of New York, at Albany, this 18th day of March, 1848.

W. D. MILLER,

Secretary of the State.

Attest:

W. D. MILLER,

Secretary of the State.

